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ABSTRACT

Efforts at introducing innovations in the public schools are hampered by the organizational structure of the schools and the attitudes of some school personnel toward change. The power to effect change is lodged with administrators and board members, but teachers, who are charged with the ultimate responsibility of implementing innovations, often resist changes. To modify opinions about decision-making responsibilities in the schools, teams of change agents, each team consisting of an administrator and several teachers from a school, consulted with staff members from the University of Pittsburgh Learning Research and Development Center. Questionnaires administered to these teams show equivocal results, with some opinion shifts in the desired direction and some in the opposite direction, and few differences between experimental and control groups. (EA)

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Change In Teacher Attitudes Toward Decision-Making and School Organization

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Efforts to innovate in education are handicapped critically by the organizational structure of schools and by the attitudes of school personnel toward change. The power to bring about change is highly centralized in the school board and the school administrators; decision-making tends to be one-way from administrators to school personnel. Having little opportunity to participate responsibly in planning and development activities, teachers are typically wary of, or apathetic, toward educational innovations.

The characteristic procedures by which educational innovations have been disseminated to schools may be grossly summarized under a "specialization" strategy.[1] In this strategy, the expertise of the innovator is conferred on the practitioner. The adopting school is provided with a package of materials and procedures, including procedures for training teachers. The specialization strategy seems both logical, in that it transfers specialized knowledge and skill directly from the innovator to the practitioner, and administratively economical and efficient, in that the schools are furnished prepackaged and pretested programs. The model makes no intrinsic provision, however, for bringing about optimal conditions in schools for sustaining specialized innovations.

An alternative to the specialization strategy of change would be an "aggregation" strategy. Project SUCCEED, in the Learning Research

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[1]The terms "specialization" and "aggregation" were suggested by by Morris Janowitz. (See esp. "Alternative Models of Change for Inner-City Schools" in The Quality of Inequality: Urban and Suburban Public Schools, University of Chicago, 1968.) Project SUCCEED was planned and initiated, however, prior to publication of Janowitz' conceptualizations.

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and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh, was conceived in such a model. Its purpose was to study and produce an aggregate of conditions supportive of innovation in the organizational climate and structure of schools. A basic element in the SUCCEED strategy was to recruit and train a cadre of change agents from the personnel in each participating school. The cadres, in consultation with research and development personnel, carried on in-service activities to promote an interest in innovation among their colleagues; they also planned and initiated specific innovative programs in their schools. The ideal aggregation strategy posits a school in which evaluation and innovation activities are intrinsic, both in the organization of roles and functions, and in the willingness of each faculty member to make on-going assessment and revision of his practice. In actuality the SUCCEED strategy might be justified if it would stimulate even a few members of a school faculty to devise or participate in innovative programs and if, concomitantly, it would win for their efforts the sanction and sympathetic interest of their colleagues and administrators.

Succinctly, the SUCCEED staff within the Center (a) trained cadres of school people through (b) in-service meetings and workshops to (c) create and implement educational innovations.

The SUCCEED staff, acting as a catalyst, (a) informed, (b) guided, (c) evaluated, in that order, the activities of the school personnel. Two important additional functions were served by the SUCCEED staff. They helped the cadres to obtain (a) administrative sanction for change and (b) financial support beyond the normal school budget (from a Title III, ESEA grant).

Focus of this Paper

In planning this paper, we had intended to report only our efforts to measure changes in certain opinions about decision-making responsibilities among teachers in the SUCCEED schools. Some of the attitude change data, obtained by two administrations of a questionnaire in four participating and four comparison schools, are listed in Tables 1 through 4.

After considering these data in relation to observations of what teachers in the participating schools actually are doing, however, (See Table 5) it was decided to attend, in addition, to certain methodological problems in field research and evaluation and to consider some implications for influencing organizational as well as attitude change.

The evaluation aspects of Project SUCCEED were carried out in field-experiment fashion by conducting a panel study, using as respondents both the teachers in the experimental schools and teachers from a selected set of "comparison" schools. The experimental school teachers numbered about 80; control school teachers about 70. Due to the difficulties inherent in panel analysis, the numbers of the respondents for a given question tend to vary. The samples are equally representative on variables, sex, age, religious preference, education, teacher experience and social origins. As a group, the respondents represent the middle ground of American society. They would not be expected, without novel, potent instigation, to become forerunners of educational change. The first step in the strategy to facilitate organizational change in the participating schools was thus to bring about a transformation in the teacher's perceptions of their work role.

The Educational Change Effort

The traditional role of the public school teacher is, to characterize it crudely, that of a bureaucratic functionary. The teacher's professional status in schools has been more nominal than real; he has relied more on persons in higher organizational echelons than on an independent professional discipline, to define the forms and content of his work. He has received only minimal guidance and support from professional associations. To the degree that instructional goal-setting, evaluation and innovation are done at all in schools, they are perceived as system activities, not sanctioned as part of the agency of a teacher's role.

The SUCCEED summer workshop and in-service activities were aimed in part to heighten the teacher's sense of agency. It was intended to influence the cadre members and their colleagues to redesign their own roles and functions and, by forming new colleague associations and initiating new programs, to influence change in the organizational structure of the school itself. The cadre members and their colleagues were encouraged to assess their schools, especially how well they were meeting the individualized needs of their students. How might they improve their schools? Given the way power and resources were allocated in their schools, what mechanisms could teachers and administrators employ to bring about desired change?

The main change mechanism in Project SUCCEED was the teacher cadre. Each cadre was composed of at least a single administrator and several teachers from each school; they worked with the LRDC staff and with their colleagues in the schools. It was their organizational planning and development which made the larger innovation activities possible.

The cadres met throughout the school year; over the years, through attrition and new enlistment, they changed in number and personnel.

Orientation of Cadre Members--A Transactional Model

Project SUCCEED inputs to orient cadre members to their change agent role, included information about innovative programs elsewhere, limited sensitivity training, and specific instruction in at least one of the innovative programs in development at the Learning Research and Development Center. Emphasis in the Project was placed, however, on the initiation and development by the teachers of innovative programs suited to the needs of their own schools. The LRDC made available, as needed, appropriate consulting help. The Center staff also guided the successful effort by a consortium of the SUCCEED school districts to obtain Title III, ESEA funds.

Experiences in Project SUCCEED suggested to the teachers a revised work role in which they might become more responsible, innovative decision-makers. But simply heightening role awareness and interest would not be enough. They needed training to improve their competencies to communicate, establish goals and plans, and negotiate with administrators and colleagues. The Project thus aimed from the beginning to provide the cadre members and their colleagues with appropriate planning and decision-making experience.

The relations between university and school personnel in Project SUCCEED were guided by what we have come to call a "transactional" model of planned educational change. Such a model embodies certain principles of relationship between a "client" educational system, and a "consultant" system. The consultant system may be an individual or any variety of organization interested in educational change. In this research it consisted typically of a four-member staff from the Learning Research and Development

Center. The client system, in turn, may be a formal organization at any level of education. In this case, the clients were the staffs of the four participating SUCCEED schools. The original client and consultant contact may be made by either party. The main purpose of the transaction would be to assist the client system, either to incorporate a particular educational innovation or, as was the case in Project SUCCEED, to make "aggregate", adaptive changes in its organizational and social structure.

A major requirement in the transactional model is that the relationship between the client and the consultant be genuinely collaborative. The consultant offers his expertise for the guidance of the members of the client system. He does not substitute his judgement for theirs. He recognizes that the more he exerts authority and imposes his own judgements, the less likely after the consulting relationship is dissolved, that the client system will be able to manage competently its own educational change efforts.

Certain basic assumptions underly this kind of approach. First, a strategy for educational change must deal constructively with existing organizational relationships among faculty, students, administrators and community groups. Where these relationships are assessed to be inimical to change, the strategy must provide for their alteration.

Second, the consultant-client relationship is time-limited. The client system is presumed to be ultimately capable of deciding about and carrying out plans which may emerge from their collaboration. A necessary condition of the collaboration is, thus, that it be self-dissolving. Consultant and client form, in the sense that Miles uses the concept, a new temporary system; if they were to remain in a quasi-permanent relationship,

the consultant would become, in effect, part of the client system. Finally, it is assumed that, even in a public school bureaucracy, the staff members can mobilize the competence and power to make and implement significant innovative decisions; the consultant acts, in their mobilization effort, as temporary guide and facilitator.

Teacher Attitudes

As part of the evaluation effort in Project SUCCEED, a panel study was conducted, utilizing an extensive questionnaire administered two times to teachers in the experimental and the control schools. The questionnaire was first given before extensive work between the LRDC staff and the schools, and then again approximately 18 months later after a series of planning and development operations. The questionnaire had several sections, including the Crofts and Halpin scales to measure organizational climate, and a section on Educational Futures; the latter, based on procedures used by Nehmevajsa in research on political futures, asked the respondents to rate separately the likelihood and the desirability of a number of innovations being made in their schools by 1975.

The data reported here are from a set of questions which asked teachers to respond to certain decision-making situations. They were asked to rank, on a five-point scale, the degree of participation that certain reference groups within the school should exercise in specified decision-making situations. A second facet of the same question was their ranking, again on a five-point scale, of the actual participation enjoyed by these same reference groups. Our concern here is with the section which deals specifically with ideal decision-making, that is the teacher's perceptions of how much each of several reference groups should participate in making various kinds

of decisions. Because our attention is on teacher perceptions and attitude change, we are most interested here in whether teachers indicated a desire to take on for themselves greater decison-making power, and to lessen the power of school groups of which they were not members.

A comparison of group response scores between Time 1 and Time 2 revealed no statistically significant changes. A panel analysis, however, tracing changes over time in the same respondents was somewhat more indicative of change. Tables 1 through 4, with the data arranged in terms of the percentage of teachers responding, summarizes the responses to the questions noted at the head of the page. The column entitled "Percent of Shifts in a Positive Direction" summarizes response changes of one step or more from Time 1 to Time 2 in the direction of granting greater authority, and participation in decision-making to each reference group. The "No Change" category is the diagonal of our tables, in that it indicates the percent of ratings which remained the same at Time 2 as at Time 1. In Table 1, we see that 40% of the teacher respondents in the experimental (SUCCEED) schools had moved in a positive direction when considering the possibility of a representative committee of teachers planning and evaluating in-service workshops; 26% had moved in a negative direction, and 34% remained unchanged in their opinion. By contrast, 24% of the teachers in the control schools had moved in a positive direction when considering the part that should be played by a representative committee of teachers, while 26% had moved in the negative direction, and 48% had remained unchanged. Reading down the table, one can note the large negative increase when teachers were asked ~~to consider the role that should be played by~~

to rate the role that should be played by superintendents in the experimental schools, and the large negative increase in both sets of schools with reference to administrators as a group.

The data in Tables 1 through 4 suggest that between Time 1 and Time 2, the perceptions of the teacher respondents of the degree to which different reference groups should participate in school decision-making, shifted in the following ways:

Experimental Schools

1. Positively in all four situations with reference to a committee of teachers.

2. Positively in three out of four situations, with reference to teacher faculties; in the fourth, the positive and negative shifts canceled each other.

3. Positively in two out of four situations for individual teachers; in one situation, positive and negative shifts canceled each other.

4. Negatively in all four situations, with reference to the superintendent.

5. Negatively in three out of four situations with reference to the school board; the exception is a situation involving the relationship of the school to the larger community.

Control Schools

1. Positively in three out of four situations in favor of a committee of teachers.

2. Positively in three out of four situations with reference to ~~a committee of teachers and to~~ the teacher faculty.

3. Negative in three out of four situations with reference to

individual teachers.

4. Negative in three out of four situations with reference to superintendents, school principals and administrators as a group.

Although as evidence they are unlikely to dazzle the eyes of a researcher, the comparative shifts between experimental and control schools intimate the kinds of influences at work in the experimental schools. When considered in relation to certain Project events and problems, they may have some useful lessons. Table 5 suggests that many important changes in teacher activities and school programs have taken place during the years of the SUCCEED Project. Similar changes have taken place in the other three participating schools, although it would require more detailed analysis to establish than we can afford here. Only minimal activities beyond traditional basic programs can be seen in the control schools.

Discussions with administrators and school personnel also reveal marked differences in faculty morale between experimental and control schools. If our findings are valid that teacher behavior and morale in the SUCCEED schools has changed, they are only vaguely reflected in the attitude data.

The possible reasons for the discrepancies between our field observations and these questionnaire data would fill a lengthy list. Some of the problems are endemic in survey research on attitudes, especially research which involves efforts to change attitudes systematically; some lie in the particular design and procedures of Project SUCCEED; still others in the inevitable hitches and crises which distort and impede long-term development efforts in field situations.

Perhaps we can sort out some of the more pertinent reasons during our panel discussion. This paper simply poses the attitude change and measurement problem in the larger context of educational change and innovation.

Table 1.

The shift pattern in response to the question,
"Ideally, who should plan and evaluate in-service workshops?"

	SUCCEED Schools			Control Schools		
Reference Groups	Percentage of Shifts in a positive direction	Percentage of Shifts in a negative direction	No Change	Percentage of Shifts in a positive direction	Percentage of Shifts in a negative direction	No Change
Representative Committee of Teachers	40%	26%	34%	24%	28%	48%
Teacher Faculties	34%	18%	48%	32%	12%	56%
Individual Teachers	33%	20%	47%	27%	25%	48%
School Board	29%	36%	35%	29%	45%	26%
Superintendents	12.5%	47.5%	40%	20%	40%	40%
Principal of the local school	25%	19%	56%	19%	22%	59%
Administrators as a group	23%	40%	37%	19%	40.5%	40.5%
Median Number of Responses = 77 Mean Number of Responses = 77				Median Number of Responses = 63 Mean Number of Responses = 63		

Table 2.

The shift pattern in response to the question,
"Who, ideally, should develop policies and
procedures to acquaint new teachers with the school system?"

Reference Groups	SUCCEED Schools: Percentage of Shifts in a positive direction	SUCCEED Schools: Percentage of Shifts in a negative direction	SUCCEED Schools: No Change	Control Schools: Percentage of Shifts in a positive direction	Control Schools: Percentage of Shifts in a negative direction	Control Schools: No Change
Representative Committee of Teachers	36%	29%	35%	41%	33%	26%
Teacher Faculties	33 1/3%	33 1/3%	33 1/3%	31%	29%	40%
Individual Teachers	32%	32%	36%	24%	27%	39%
School Board	35%	23%	42%	38%	41%	21%
Superintendents	18%	33%	49%	29%	19%	52%
Principal of the local school	15%	20%	65%	18%	26%	56%
Administrators as a group	32%	22%	46%	39%	26%	35%
	Median Number of Responses = 81 Mean Number of Responses = 81			Median Number of Responses = 66 Mean Number of Responses = 65		

Table 3.

The shift pattern in response to the question "Who, ideally, should decide which teachers will teach classes at different ability levels?"

Reference Groups	SUCCEED Schools			Control Schools		
	Percentage of Shifts in a positive direction	Percentage of Shifts in a negative direction	No Change	Percentage of Shifts in a positive direction	Percentage of Shifts in a negative direction	No Change
Representative Committee of Teachers	39%	31%	30%	34%	31%	35%
Teacher Faculties	40%	34%	26%	31%	38%	31%
Individual Teachers	39%	25%	36%	27%	40%	33%
School Board	17%	34%	49%	33%	30%	37%
Superintendents	16%	44%	40%	32%	39%	29%
Principal of the local school	23%	28%	49%	27%	27%	46%
Administrators as a group	35%	31%	34%	27%	38%	35%
	Median Number of Responses = 76 Mean Number of Responses = 76			Median Number of Responses = 64 Mean Number of Responses = 63		

Table 4.

The shift pattern in response to the question, "Who, ideally, should select textbooks and workbooks to be used in the classroom?"

Reference Groups	SUCCEED Schools: Percentage of Shifts in a positive direction	SUCCEED Schools: Percentage of Shifts in a negative direction	SUCCEED Schools: No Change	Control Schools: Percentage of Shifts in a positive direction	Control Schools: Percentage of Shifts in a negative direction	Control Schools: No Change
Representative Committee of Teachers	46%	29%	25%	37%	31%	32%
Teacher Faculties	34%	28%	38%	35%	33%	32%
Individual Teachers	15%	25%	60%	21%	27%	52%
School Board	26%	40%	34%	28%	31%	41%
Superintendents	20%	47%	33%	33%	38%	29%
Principal of the local school	20%	35%	45%	16%	44%	40%
Administrators as a group	30%	41%	29%	32%	46%	22%

Median Number of Responses - 76
Mean Number of Responses - 75

Median Number of Responses - 64
Mean Number of Responses - 64

Table 5.

SUCCEED HIGH SCHOOL

Innovative Programs

SUCCEED High School has 1100 students in three grades, and 50 faculty members. It is in a consolidated, semi-rural, politically conservative district 50 miles from Pittsburgh. The district's tax base has shrunken as coal mining declined and other industries departed. The school has participated in Project SUCCEED during the past 3 1/2 years; the programs listed below have been initiated during the past 2 1/2 years.

Innovative Program	Implications for Planned Change Process
1. Independent Study Program. 330 seniors released from all but required classes to work on individual projects.	1. Committee of 4 teachers and 4 students conducts on-going evaluation of Program. Exploring its expansion to earlier grades.
2. Short-Term, High-Interest Courses. Free electives, no credit. Four current classes on: Black Studies, first-aid, Existentialism, and problems in physical science.	2. These courses are planned and scheduled in collaboration between teacher and students.
3. Teacher Self-Study Workshop. 31 out of 47 teachers meet after school weekly. Discuss recordings of classroom sessions; self-administer and score questionnaires assessing their own role behaviors.	3. Voluntary; no formal leaders.
4. Teacher-Advisor Program. Each student selects teacher whose subject field and/or personal style appeals to him. Advising may involve enriched study and tutoring as well as discussion of the student's plans and problems.	4. Complements counseling services. Provides wider variety of adults for students to relate to, and expands role of the teacher as perceived by both students and teachers.
5. Program in Social Studies. Uses inductive method. The school personnel have written a description of the program for dissemination.	5. Initiated own programs, sought out consultation from Carnegie-Mellon Curriculum Center. Recently demonstrated program, by invitation, to 44 State Regional Coordinators in Harrisburg. Inquiries for materials have come from Arkansas, Minnesota, and elsewhere.

6. Coordinated Information and Guidance System (CIGS) Groups of 15 students meet regularly to explore values underlying their own aspirations, plans and behavior. Volunteer teacher acts as permissive discussion leader and consultant.	6. CIGS originally designed at LRDC. School now manages and adapts its own. Some teacher volunteers have experienced considerable role shock as permissive group "leaders". Claim new awareness of and respect for student attitudes and problems.
7. Learning Resources Center. Two specially equipped rooms set aside for student browsing or special projects.	7. Program not yet fully operating. Student usage constrained because rooms adjoin library. Negotiations to gain agreement on transferring rooms and enlarging programs involve deliberate planned change strategy.
8. Changes in School Climate. Administration and faculty collaborating to reduce arbitrary regulation of student behavior. Students sign own explanations for lateness and absence. Students can choose where to go in the building when not in regular class. Space set aside for a "talking commons". Planning to eliminate change-of-class bells.	8. Students, teachers and administrators consult with each other to plan organizational changes.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS AND JUDGEMENTS CONCERNING THE PLANNED CHANGE PROCESS

1. All programs have been teacher-initiated. The school board and the superintendent sanctioned the school-university collaboration but took no role in development activities. The original building principal implicitly opposed the Project. After two years and considerable organizational maneuvering, he was replaced by a member of the cadre.	3. Interested groups from five school districts and from a teacher college have visited school to study its programs.
2. No innovative programs are in operation in the other school districts in this region. One neighboring district with a large tax base has allocated $100,000 for curriculum development but seems to have made no substantial progress.	4. Since the first two years of the Project, all SUCCEED operations have been managed autonomously by school personnel.
	5. The Title III ESEA Budget may expire June 30. The SUCCEED cadre leader predicts that almost all innovative programs would continue without outside funds.
	6. The Project has survived two school board elections and two changes of superintendents.